

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUITO 03055 031703Z

40

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 L-02 NSC-05 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 AID-05 PC-01 /044 W

----- 015440

P R 031620Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5421

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 3055

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, EC

SUBJ: REPORTED DETENTION OF MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT

REF: QUITO 3028

1. THE REPORTED DETENTION OF MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT (AND PRINCIPAL CABINET MINISTER) REAR ADMIRAL ALFREDO POVEDA BURBANO APPEARS TO HAVE STEMMED FROM A CURIOUS SET OF COINCIDENCES WHICH GOT THE QUITO RUMOR MILLS CRANKED UP IN RECORD TIME. POVEDA CALLED A PRESS CONFERENCE SHORTLY AFTER 6 PM FRIDAY, MAY 2ND, TO DENY THE RUMORS THAT HE WAS UNDER HOUSE ARREST, AND HE WAS SEEN AT QUITO AIRPORT SATURDAY MORNING BOARDING THE REGULAR 8:30 FLIGHT TO GUAYAQUIL ARMED WITH NOTHING MORE THAN AN ATTACHE CASE, HIS USUAL BODYGUARDS, AND NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

2. THE CONFUSION BEGAN WHEN A PRESS CONFERENCE, SCHEDULED FOR NOON ON FRIDAY, WAS HASTILY CANCELLED, AND POVEDA WAS SEEN LEAVING THE MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT IN THE COMPANY OF SEVERAL ARMY OFFICERS, HEADING TOWARD THE AIRPORT. IT NOW APPEARS THAT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN CONNECTED WITH THE DETENTION AND EXILE TO ECUADOR'S ORIENTE PROVINCES OF THE NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE CONSERVATION PARTY, JULIO CESAR TRUJILLO (BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY). POVEDA HIMSELF LATER EXPLAINED HIS ABSENCE FROM HIS OFFICE BY SAYING HE

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WAS OCCUPIED WITH "OFFICIAL POLICE BUSINESS." IN ANY

EVENT, PRESS INQUIRIES TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF ADMINISTRATION (PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN BG CARLOS AGUIRRE) LED TO AN ESPECIALLY-ARRANGED PRESS CONFERENCE BEING CALLED AT THE MINISTRY OF GOVERNMENT AT 6 PM FRIDAY, WHERE POVEDA HIMSELF DENOUNCED THE RUMORS.

3. WE BELIEVE THAT THERE IS CONSIDERABLY MORE TO THIS EPISODE THAN HAS THUS FAR MET THE EYE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW IT CLOSELY.
HEMENWAY

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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To: STATE
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